

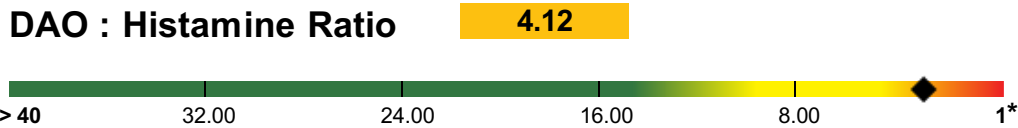
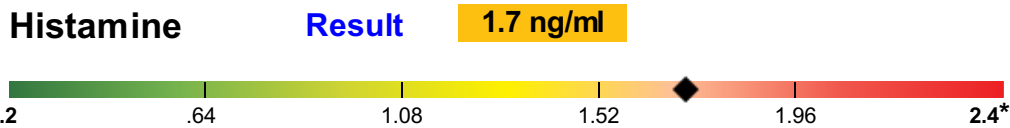
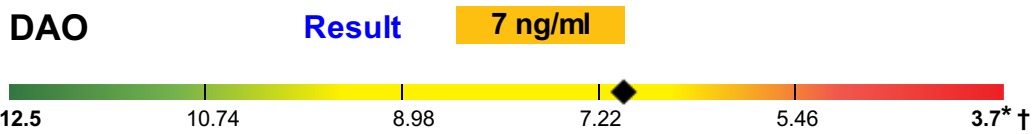
RESULTS: DRIED BLOOD SPOT TEST

Accession #: 100039465 • Patient: Jane Smith

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Patient: Jane Smith
Tel: () - **Email:** transaction@movedbyweb.ca
Sex: Female **Age:** 38 yr **Date of Birth:** 1982-09-25
Health Care Professional: John Smith
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Report issued: 2021-08-02
Sample collection: 2020-06-25

DIAMINE OXIDASE (DAO) / HISTAMINE


*Reference range derived from a normal distribution of results, encompassing 95% of a randomly selected population

† DAO values are shown in ng/ml, where the conversion factor is 1U/ml = 1.25 ng/ml

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[Convert to pdf, Save or PRINT >>](#)**GENERAL COMMENTARY Diamine Oxidase (DAO) / Histamine**

The comments provided here are for educational purposes only. The results in this report should not be interpreted as diagnostic, nor should they be viewed as treatment recommendations. Those decisions are the responsibility of the health care professional. Moreover, the reference range shown in this report is derived from a normal distribution of results, that encompass 95% of randomly selected individuals in a population (see below).

Histamine and Diamine Oxidase

Histamine is a nitrogenous compound known to be involved in twenty three different physiological functions which include local immune responses, neurotransmission, as well as regulation of physiological function in the gastrointestinal tract.

Histamine is either stored or rapidly metabolized and inactivated by either of two degradative enzymes, histamine-N-methyltransferase or diamine oxidase (DAO); the latter being the principal enzyme observed in the digestive tract.

The testing of histamine, together with DAO levels, provides important information that is not revealed with standard food sensitivity tests. The latter is often thought to be the underlying cause of gut inflammation and dysfunction, when in fact the reason may actually be an imbalance of accumulated histamine and the capacity for its degradation by enzymes such as DAO. This imbalance may result in a condition known as Histamine Intolerance (HIT).¹¹ HIT is an acquired problem and is seen in approximately 3% of the population. Symptoms may occur in up to 20% when histamine-rich food is consumed together with DAO inhibitors, such as alcohol. Women represent about 80% of those affected, with most of them aged 40 or over. It is important to note that the risk of developing this intolerance is increased in those individuals who suffer from inflammatory intestinal diseases or cross-sensitivities.¹¹

Why Test for Histamine?

Histamine is involved in many inflammatory and allergic processes, including both immediate and delayed hypersensitivity reactions. Histamine excess can be triggered by its release in the body as a result of a variety of environmental triggers, from the ingestion of foods with high histamine content, a deficiency in DAO, or both.

The Histamine reference range is from 0.2 to 2.4 ng/ml:

- Below the reference range levels, < 0.2 ng/ml, indicate a low probability of HIT.
- Above the reference range levels, > 2.4 ng/ml, indicate a high probability of HIT.
- Levels between 0.2 to 2.4 ng/ml indicate an increasing probability of HIT as the value approaches the upper limit of the reference range.¹⁰

High levels of histamine:

- Runny nose, sneezing, congestion
- Itching, hives, skin flushing
- Dizziness or vertigo
- Headache, migraine
- Nausea, vomiting
- Intestinal cramps, gas
- Diarrhea

- Abnormal menstrual cycle
- Shortness of breath
- Abnormal heart rate
- High blood pressure
- Severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis)
- Abnormalities may also arise in the following:
 - Memory
 - Body temperature
 - Circadian rhythm
 - Locomotion
 - Learning

What causes high histamine levels?

- Allergies (IgE reactions)
- Gluten Intolerance
- Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth (SIBO)
- Intestinal Permeability (“Leaky Gut”)
- Gastrointestinal bleeding
- Histamine-rich foods
- DAO deficiency or DAO-blocking foods: alcohol, energy drinks, and tea
- Genetic mutations (common in people of Asian descent)
- Inflammatory bowel diseases: Crohn’s, ulcerative colitis
- Medications:
 - Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (eg: Ibuprofen-Motrin, ASA-Aspirin)
 - Antidepressants (eg: Effexor, Zoloft, Prozac, Cymbalta)
 - Immune modulators (eg: Enbrel, Humira)
 - Anti-arrhythmics (eg: Propranolol, Norvasc, Cardizem)
 - H2 blockers (eg: Zantac, Pepcid, Tagamet)

Low levels of histamine (Histapenia):

- Fatigue
- Sleep-wake disorders
- Depression and anxiety in older adults; paranoia in younger people
- Convulsions

What causes low histamine levels?

Excess copper can create low levels by decreasing histamine in the brain. In turn, the lowered levels of histamine allow more copper to accumulate. High copper in the brain may lead to a state of restlessness, insomnia, violence, depression, irritability, paranoia, and high blood pressure.

Why Test for DAO?

The ingestion of histamine rich food, alcohol or drugs that release histamine or block DAO, may provoke an imbalance of accumulated histamine and the capacity for its degradation, already referred to above as Histamine Intolerance (HIT).

An impaired histamine degradation, based on reduced DAO activity and the resulting histamine excess, may cause numerous symptoms mimicking an allergic reaction.¹¹

DAO activity does not depend on the DAO alone, but also on cofactors such as vitamin C, vitamin B6, copper or manganese ions. Copper is a central component of DAO. A deficiency in copper can result in insufficient DAO being produced. Vitamin B6 is a cofactor of DAO. If vitamin B6 is missing, DAO is unable to degrade histamine.

Therefore, in assessing HIT via the DAO activity test one should also consider determining the levels of these cofactors. The symptoms of HIT can be caused by low DAO activity because the above-mentioned cofactors are not sufficiently available.

If the DAO levels are in the normal range but the histamine levels are high, it may indicate that the issue is not insufficient DAO, but rather an overproduction of histamine, due to factors such as gut dysbiosis.

However, if the histamine levels are normal, but the DAO levels are very low, it suggests a possible genetic deficiency of diamine oxidase.

The DAO reference range is from 12.5 to 3.75 ng/ml (10-3 U/ml), with no significant daily variations or gender differences:

- Below the reference range levels, < 3.75 ng/ml, indicate a high probability of HIT.
- Above the reference range levels, > 12.5 ng/ml, indicate a low probability of HIT.
- Levels from 12.5 to 3.75 ng/ml indicate an increasing probability of HIT.¹¹

Low levels of DAO:

- Skin rash and pruritis (itching), urticaria (hives), eczema, psoriasis
- Nasal congestion, asthma
- Headache, migraine
- Chronic fatigue
- Anxiety, depression
- Inflammation, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
- Estrogen dominance, dysmenorrhea, Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS)
- Muscular pain, fibromyalgia
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Hypertension, hypotension, arrhythmia,

- Multiple sclerosis and other neurological conditions

Determination of DAO activity, together with a detailed history, helps to differentiate food allergy and histamine intolerance. It should be performed in suspected patients who have headaches, urticaria, pruritus, diarrhea and hypotension, where food allergy has been excluded.¹²

Individuals who are unable to metabolize histamine will often improve with a variety of antihistamines. Because DAO formation occurs in the gastrointestinal system, lower than normal levels are suggestive of poor digestive dysfunction, as well as problems in the intestinal barrier.¹³

The Importance of the DAO : Histamine Ratio

The DAO : Histamine Ratio is helpful in highlighting the imbalances in DAO and histamine levels.

High Ratio: There is enough DAO enzyme available for histamine degradation, or that there is a relatively low level of free histamine in the system.

Low Ratio: There is insufficient DAO enzyme available to degrade the relative amount of free histamine. It should be noted that even if DAO levels are normal, symptoms may still occur if the histamine levels are very high.

DAO: A Biomarker of Intestinal Barrier Integrity

The degradative enzyme, Diamine Oxidase (DAO), is the principal enzyme observed in the digestive tract which scavenges extracellular Histamine. Recent research has begun to shed light on another important aspect of DAO activity, which is unique among intestinal mucosal enzymes: Circulating blood levels of DAO represent a reliable marker of mucosal maturation & integrity¹⁴. Indeed, serum DAO activity has been shown to correlate with intestinal permeability of the small intestine¹⁵.

Intestinal Barrier Changes

Intestinal barrier damage is due to a number of potential causes, amongst them mechanical, microbial and/or enzymatic action. These vectors of damage can be due to:

- Genetic predisposition
- Dysbiosis
- Infections
- Loss of luminal mucous barrier, with a concomitant decrease in levels of SIgA and antimicrobial peptides (AMPs).
- High luminal histamine levels from endogenous or exogenous sources, or both. Increased histamine can occur due to gut microbial action, a diet rich in histamine or histidine, an increased mast cell response as part of an immune reaction and acute or chronic stress.

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DAO is synthesized by mucosal cells of intestinal villi crypts. The damage caused by one or more of the factors above can lead to a loss of barrier integrity, which in turn can lead to further inflammatory reactions. All of this will often lead to increased intestinal permeability, which will then enter into a vicious cycle of more inflammation and barrier damage. During the period of initial damage, the mucosal cells release increased amounts of DAO which increases its serum concentration. Therefore, a change in blood DAO concentration is an indication of damage to the intestinal cavity. High DAO in blood is tightly linked to abnormal intestinal barrier function in an acute stage¹⁶. With more chronic damage, as often seen in cases of inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD), such as Chron's disease or Ulcerative Colitis, one begins to encounter apoptosis of the crypt cells within the villi. This decrease or loss of DAO levels in the gut lumen & blood is a sign of chronic or late stage mucosal damage to the barrier, and is a sign of breakdown in cell architecture. More specifically, it is a decrease in DAO production capacity due to the destroyed or dysfunctional specialized mucosal cells¹⁵. This makes DAO a sensitive & accurate marker for monitoring Crohn's Disease activity and other inflammatory bowel conditions.

The DAO: Histamine Ratio and Intestinal Permeability

As stated previously, the DAO: Histamine Ratio is helpful in highlighting the imbalances in DAO and histamine levels.

High Ratio: Normally a high ratio is an indication that there is enough DAO enzyme available for histamine degradation, or that there is a relatively low level of free histamine in the system. A very high ratio, due to high DAO in the face of low Histamine, could be a sign of early breakdown in barrier integrity.

Low Ratio: When low levels of the DAO enzyme are available to degrade normal or high amounts of free Histamine, it is often a sign of abnormally low production of DAO, due to a breakdown in cell architecture, or even cell destruction, as seen in cases of IBD.

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